

PLACE ON YOUR AGENCY LETTERHEAD

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **PANDEMIC INFLUENZA PLAN IN PLACE FOR ADAMS COUNTY**

In light of recent national attention given to pandemic influenza also called the 'bird flu', Adams County Public Health – a unit of Adams County Health and Human Services Department is providing details regarding the plans that are in place should an influenza pandemic become a reality.

“We have developed our pandemic influenza response plan, and we will practice our response with community partners beginning in December” said Linda McFarlin, Health Officer.

“Our plan for the county is similar to every other counties plan except for the actions specific to Adams County,” says McFarlin. “The needs of our population are being addressed in this plan”. The plan includes specific places and personnel who will assist with receiving and administering the vaccines or other preventative drugs as well as the specifics of communication that would occur within the community. The Adams County Emergency Management Director and Mound View Memorial Hospital are aware of this plan and will be instrumental in practicing our response.

A pandemic influenza outbreak is caused by a virus that has not circulated among people, or has not circulated among people for a long time. Because the human immune system is unfamiliar with the 'new' virus, it is not as prepared to fight the infection, thereby causing more serious illness among more people than is usually associated with seasonal human flu outbreaks.

The current outbreak of bird flu (avian influenza) among people in Southeast Asia has health officials concerned about the possibility of a pandemic developing. The World Health Organization has reported 122 confirmed human cases of bird flu in Southeast Asia due to contact with infected birds from January 1, 2004, to November 1, 2005.

Wisconsin has stepped up disease tracking, and is testing sick individuals for bird flu if there is a possibility they were exposed to the virus, such as travelers who recently returned from Southeast Asia and are now exhibiting flu-like symptoms.

There are several things that each of you can do to protect yourselves and your families from any influenza virus:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based waterless hand sanitizer.
- Avoid being exposed to people who are sick with flu-like symptoms

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- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue whenever you cough or sneeze-then throw the tissue away.
- Avoid exposing your infant unnecessarily to large crowds
- Do not share food utensils such as cups, straws, forks, spoons
- Frequently clean often touched areas such as doorknobs, telephone etc.
- Do not smoke around children
- If you think that you have the flu, stay home and take care of yourself

Visit [http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/preparedness/pdf\\_files/WIPandemicInfluenzaPlan.pdf](http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/preparedness/pdf_files/WIPandemicInfluenzaPlan.pdf) to view Wisconsin's influenza pandemic plan.

For additional information about pandemic influenza, see: <http://pandemicflu.gov>

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